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ABSTRACT

A practicum focused on improving listening skills in four- to five-year-old children. The practicum targeted the following specific listening skills for improvement: (1) discriminating English phonemes; (2) recognizing words heard in a story; (3) repeating a short story; and (4) following verbal instructions. Teaching strategies which the practicum implemented in the classroom included modeling, improving the listening environment, structuring listening activities, group activities and games, taped listening sessions, and storytelling. In addition, information on improving listening skills in the home and classroom was distributed to parents and educators through handouts and workshops. The effectiveness of the implementation was measured by means of the teacher-made pretest and posttest as well as evaluations from students in the target group, their parents, and the teacher. Results indicated improved listening skills in the target group and increased awareness of the importance of listening skills in the target group and their parents. (Six figures are included. Thirty-five references and extensive appendixes--including student data, test data, classroom activities, guidelines for implementing the strategies, and samples of information distributed to parents and educators--are attached.) (Author/PRA)

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IMPROVING LISTENING SKILLS IN YOUNG CHILDREN

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by

Stephanie L. Brown

A Practicum Report

submitted to the Faculty of the Center for the
Advancement of Education of Nova University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science.

The abstract of this report may be placed in a
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Abstract

Improving Listening Skills in Young Children
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Nova University,
The Center for the Advancement of Education.
Descriptors: Auditory Comprehension/ Listening/
Receptive Language/ Auditory Training/ Listening
Habits/ Language Processing/ Listening Comprehension
Tests/ Listening Skills/ Listening Comprehension/

Low scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test indicated a need for improved listening skills in a group of four-to-five year-old children. Specific listening skills targeted for improvement were 1) discriminating English phonemes, 2) recognizing words heard in a story, 3) repeating a short story, and 4) following verbal instructions. Teaching strategies implemented in the classroom included 1) modeling, 2) improving the listening environment, 3) structuring listening activities, 4) group activities and games, 5) taped listening lessons, and 6) storytelling. Information on improving listening skills in the home and classroom was also distributed to parents and educators through handouts and workshops. The effectiveness of the implementation was measured by means of the teacher made pretest and posttest as well as evaluations from students in the target group, their parents, and the teacher. Results indicated improved listening skills in the target group and increased awareness of the importance of listening skills in the target group and their parents. Appendices include student data, test data, classroom activities, guidelines for implementing the strategies, and samples of information distributed to parents and educators.

Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. When it has been necessary to draw on the work of others, published and unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other professionals in the field and in the hope that my own work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

Stephanie L. Brown

Minor contributions of a professional character and comparable nonprofessional assistance may also be acknowledged.

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CHAPTER I

Purpose

Background -The Community

The setting for this practicum was a private Montessori school located in a small affluent community. This community was geographically isolated from the mainland and was accessible only by a single toll bridge or by boat. The town had only about 2,000 registered voters but its population swelled to approximately 10,000 during tourist season when part-time residents arrived from the Northern United States or from Central and South America to resume life in their second homes. The tax base was about $1.4 billion.

The residential and business district occupied an island strip which was approximately one mile long and one quarter mile wide. It was bounded on one end by a county park and on the other end by a state park and

historical site. The residences were divided among oceanfront condos, beach-front mansions, and lavishly renovated single-family homes as well as modest apartment buildings and small 40-year-old tract houses. In addition to the private homes and residential condominiums, there were two hotels, plus three 25-year-old shopping centers and several small office buildings filled with local businesses. Chain stores were appearing in two large new malls, both hotels hoped to enlarge, and a third hotel and convention center was in the pre-construction stage. A majority of the residents, fearful of losing the small town feeling of the community, had recently voted to incorporate in an effort to gain more control over taxation and zoning and retain their sense of neighborhood.

The school had been established in 1968 and was closely integrated into community life. All staff members lived in the community except two, both of whom had strong family ties in the community and lived nearby on the mainland. All staff members had enrolled their own children in the school at one time or another. These factors contributed to the staff's

strong involvement in and commitment to the school and the community. Staff members saw students and their families at the grocery store, on the beach, and at social functions as well as in the classroom setting. They knew the families served by the school very well and were able to be especially responsive to their needs.

The School

The school was housed in a church conveniently situated on a 1.2 acre tract of land located near one end of the residential/business section. It was within walking distance of several sites for field trips such as the U.S. Post Office, a health food store, a local park, a nursery, a frozen yogurt parlor, and the local branch of the Miami-Dade Public Library. The kindergarteners walked to the library once a month for arts and crafts with the children's librarian; other sites were visited upon occasion. Field trips to other close-by parks and beaches were easily arranged with parents and teachers providing transportation.

The church's tract contained two buildings, spaciously landscaped grounds, and a parking lot. One

building was the sanctuary where the children went for weekly chapel services and where religious services were provided for a congregation of 150. The school occupied one wing of the second building which also housed administrative offices and a 1,750 square foot Parish Hall used for church and community functions but also available for school use. Parent meetings, parenting classes, and student presentations were held in the Parish Hall and teachers could also usually use it for such activities as movies or rainy-day playgound activities.

The south side of this building was the school's L-shaped fenced playground, which was about 4,300 square feet. A long sidewalk sheltered by a roof overhang was used by children riding toy vehicles. The grassy playground was well shaded by five trees and was equipped with a water fountain, picnic table, wooden playhouse, swing set, climbing dome, a low slide, and a large log modular system with low swings, a tunnel slide, a bridge, and climbing areas.

Located at the north side of the school building was a spacious patio and a yard which boasted an extensive variety of plant and animal life ideal for

science and ecology lessons. This large open grassy area was available to the school for closely supervised outdoor activities such as picnics.

This school was a member of The American Montessori Association and was accredited by The Florida Council of Independent Schools and the Florida Kindergarten Council. In addition to the Montessori program, the school hosted private courses from "Computer-Tots," "Ballet at Your School," and "Kinder-Musik." A bilingual class was also available after regular school hours.

The school contained three separate classrooms, each consisting of two well-lighted rooms and a bathroom with a child-sized commode and a low sink. Each class also had a low sink outside of the bathroom. The two larger classrooms were each about 715 square feet in size and the third was about 630 square feet. The three classrooms shared a kitchen with double sink, refrigerator, oven, and storage space. They also shared an IBM computer, a Super-8 movie projector, a zerox machine, and a VCR.

Each of the larger classrooms was equipped with a complete range of Montessori materials for ages two and

one-half through six. The materials were displayed on low shelves accessible to the children. Low tables and chairs were positioned to leave open floor space for free play or for lessons presented on mats. The third classroom was equipped similarly but was designed for younger children and lacked some of the advanced Montessori lessons. Each of the three classrooms had an assortment of books available to the children and each classroom had, in addition to the Montessori materials, a variety of dolls, blocks, toys, and games for free play. An assortment of art supplies such as paper, crayons, pencils, and scissors was also available.

Ninety-three students attended the school in one of several programs. Twelve attended the Kindergarten program from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Twenty-nine attended the Junior Kindergarten program from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Fifty-three attended the pre-school program either from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. or from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m. Of these 93 students, 48 were girls and 45 were boys. Teachers designated their students' cultural backgrounds as 54 Hispanic (having at least one parent who spoke Spanish as the native

language), 35 as Anglo, and 4 as Other (Arabic, Oriental, or Indian.)

Since children from families with current or former students at the school had priority for admission and there was traditionally a long waiting list, many families sent more than one child to the school. Siblings frequently attended the same class. Since, in addition, most children spent two or three years at the school, it was not unusual for a teacher to work with children from the same family for five years or more. The parents placed high value on their children's education and were active in the school. Most parents attended all school functions as well as observing in the classroom once or twice a year. Several volunteered for special activities or worked as substitutes in the classroom and sometimes continued to participate after their own children had outgrown the school.

The Staff

The non-teaching staff included four people. The minister of the church was head-master of the school

and gave final approval on all fiscal, administrative, and curriculum decisions. The office manager handled all daily administrative matters for the church in addition to billing and collection of tuition for the school. The secretary also worked for both school and church. The sexton did heavy cleaning and minor repairs and maintained the grounds.

There were nine full-time staff members in direct contact with children. The directress of the school administered all matters directly related to the school. This included admissions, personnel, curriculum, accreditation, testing, public relations, and purchasing. The directress was the immediate supervisor for the teaching staff, functioned as the professional resource person, interviewed all incoming students and their families, and did all student testing. The remainder of the teaching staff consisted of five teachers, two aides, and an intern. Each of the two larger classrooms was staffed by two teachers and an aide or intern. The smaller class was staffed by a teacher and an aide.

The staff's level of education was high. Of the nine full-time staff members in direct contact with

children, all had their high school diploma, and two had earned some additional college credits but had not completed a degree. Six had completed a Bachelor of Arts degree and one, this writer, was completing a Master of Science degree. In addition, five staff members, including this writer, had Montessori certificates and two more were currently working towards Montessori certification. Six of the staff members, including this writer, were bilingual in Spanish and English; three spoke only English.

The teaching staff was very stable; turn-over was low. The directress had been with the school for over 20 years and two teachers, including this writer, had worked there more than 10 years. Two teachers had five or more years seniority; the intern had been with the school three years while one teacher and two aides were in their second year.

In addition to the full-time staff, a part-time music teacher worked two hours each week. All of the children received music instruction for one half hour a week in a group of 15-25 children. A number of parents of former or current students worked as substitutes for staff taking sick days or personal days.

The "Blue Room"

The setting of this practicum was one of the large classrooms which will be hereafter referred to as the Blue Room in accordance with then current usage at the school. This simply referred to the color of the walls. The writer of this practicum held the position of lead teacher of the Blue Room.

The Blue Room was made up of two adjoining rooms with a row of French doors along the north side. The view opened onto a pleasant shady patio furnished with a wooden picnic table and a sand table. A large partially walled yard extended beyond the patio. Its various trees and bushes were home to squirrels and many kinds of birds and lizards.

Children entered the front room which was equipped with Montessori materials for lessons in language, sensorial, geography, and science. The open floor space had a tape circle on it around which the children arranged themselves on mats for "line time," roll call, or other activities with the entire group. The second room was equipped with Montessori materials for lessons

in practical life and mathematics. It also held the sink, the bathroom, and the door to the kitchen. Along one end of each room was a large closet with folding doors.

The 32 children who attended class in the Blue Room ranged in age from two to five years old. Six of these children were kindergarteners, 17 were junior kindergarteners, seven were morning pre-school students, and two were afternoon pre-school students. As of December 1, 1990, there were eight 5-year olds, 19 four-year olds, four 3-year olds, and one 2-year old. The students were almost evenly divided between boys and girls; there were 17 girls and 15 boys.

According to teacher observation, 19 children spoke to their parents in English and 13 used Spanish with their parents. Within the school setting, 15 children used only English, one used only Spanish, and 16 were bilingual in Spanish and English. Included in the children who usually spoke English to their parents were four children who had also been observed speaking French, Italian, Portuguese or Polish. This meant that 62.5 percent of the class was bilingual.

Both teachers and the aide were bilingual. Lessons were normally presented in English but information, instructions, explanations, and comfort were offered in Spanish as needed. All information relating to health, safety, and organizational matters had to be given in both languages to ensure full comprehension.

The six and one-half hour school day in the Blue Room consisted of approximately three quarters of an hour of "line time," four hours of "work time," one hour of playground and three quarters of an hour for lunch. Fridays were devoted to creative and expressive activities in contrast to the academic emphasis throughout the rest of the week.

Thirty children arrived at the Blue Room each morning at 8:30. They had to be accompanied to the door by an adult. The lead teacher greeted the children, screened them briefly for illness, and received information from the parents about any special health needs, emergency contacts or pick-up plans. Each child would be dismissed only to his parents or those with written authorization from the parents.

Brief conferences might also have been held about a child's academic progress or behavior.

The children entered the classroom, got sitting mats, and arranged themselves around a circle on the floor to talk with each other or to read books. They were allowed to change places and move around the front room until the teacher assigned a student to collect the books and then began to call the roll. This signaled the beginning of "line time." At that time, the children had to finish their individual conversations and raise their hands to be recognized by the teacher if they wished to address the group.

"Line time" lasted about 30 minutes and was used for motor coordination exercises such as walking on the balance beam, songs and fingerplays, and exercises for basic academic skills such as learning the alphabet or counting. The teacher may also have chosen to use "line time" for a special project such as making vegetable soup or to introduce a theme such as bicycle safety. The aide led "line time" two weeks each month and each teacher did it one week a month.

A teacher not assigned to "line time" for the week used this time to prepare lessons or to present lessons

to individuals or small groups. Older children, who had already spent one or two years at the school and knew "line time" activities very well, were called to the other room for lessons. When they finished, they may have chosen to return to "line time" or to remain in the other room and work independently.

"Work time" followed "line time." The children were then free to move about both rooms in the classroom and to choose their own lessons or other activities. The teachers continued giving lessons, concentrating on an individual child or a group of two or three, while the aide directed disruptive children to appropriate activities, helped children file written work in their folders, set out juice and cookies, replenished materials as needed, and generally kept order. Since children were asked not to interrupt a teacher who was giving lessons and the aide could only be in one room at a time, each teacher paused between lessons to review the situation in the room and mediate disputes, offer guidance to children working independently, and give direction as needed.

During "work time" the children could move about freely, repeat lessons that had been presented to them

by a teacher, show their lessons to other children, socialize with whomever they liked, look at books, or watch the other children. They could not disturb another child's lesson or take from the shelf a lesson that had not been presented to them by a teacher. They could use a lesson as long as they liked and when they finished they had to return it to the correct spot on the shelf, file any papers they had produced, push their chairs in, and leave their work area clean for the next child. Then they were free to move to another lesson of their choice, ask a teacher for a new lesson, do a simple art project, or help themselves to juice and cookies.

Near the end of "work time" a child was appointed to turn off the lights. This was the visual signal for all the children to finish their lessons, straighten the rooms, and group themselves around the line in the front room. A "line leader" was appointed who called the children one by one to form a line to go to playground for one half-hour of outdoor play. One teacher accompanied the aide to supervise playground while the other used this time for preparation.

After playground, the children returned to the front classroom and a teacher read a story while the other staff members prepared the other room for lunch. Children were called to wash their hands, get their lunch boxes and choose a place to eat. They had to eat their sandwiches and fruit before their chips and snacks and could not trade food. After lunch, they began lessons again in the afternoon "work time."

The seven pre-school children were dismissed at 11:30 and the staff began their rotating lunch periods. At noon, two new pre-school children arrived and joined "work time" for about 1 1/2 hours. This was followed by playground and at 2:00 p.m. the junior kindergarteners were dismissed. The kindergarten and pre-school children had a story, a short "work time," a brief "line time," and were then dismissed at 3:00 p.m.

The two teachers in the Blue Room had worked together for five years and complemented each other well. The aide had joined the group recently and together the three formed a smoothly functioning team. Each found great satisfaction in the work; each communicated information freely and gave generous support to the others. Some duties were shared

equally, like supervision of playground or preparing projects for the weekly Art Day or the annual Art Show, but each had specific responsibilities within the classroom setting.

The aide prepared and served juice and cookies, kept lessons and supplies in order, made copies, supervised playground and lunch time, kept order during "work time," and generally freed both teachers to give lessons. Any behavioral irregularity in a child observed by the aide was promptly reported to the lead teacher.

The assistant teacher had been assigned primary responsibility for lessons in mathematics and practical life for all the children attending the Blue Room. Informal conferences with the lead teacher were held very frequently on the children's progress in these academic areas or on their overall behavior and emotional well-being. In the event of an absence for any reason, the assistant teacher assumed all duties and responsibilities of the lead teacher.

The lead teacher, the writer of this practicum, had direct responsibility for presenting all lessons in sensorial and language, which in the Montessori system

includes science and geography, and provided consultation to the assistant teacher regarding mathematics and practical life lessons. The aide and assistant teacher referred problems in behavior, adjustment to the class, or academic progress to the lead teacher, who planned appropriate intervention and supervised its implementation. In addition, the duties of this position included training and supervision of the assistant teacher and the aide, responsibility for the overall progress of all students enrolled in the class, and semi-annual evaluation of staff and students. The lead teacher also conducted conferences with parents in connection with routine classroom observations or for problem-solving purposes. The lead teacher planned holiday projects and annual functions such as the Spring Sing, and delegated work as needed to staff and parents.

Staffing in the Blue Room changed during the beginning of the implementation phase of this practicum, resulting in an increase in classroom responsibilities for the writer of this practicum. For medical reasons, both the assistant teacher and the aide had terminated their employment in the practicum

setting by the third week of the implementation process. This meant that the writer of this practicum, in the position of lead teacher, needed to assume responsibility for presenting Montessori lessons in all areas as well as training three new aides to replace the missing staff members. In spite of the unavoidable period of adjustment, classroom routine was successfully maintained and the implementation phase progressed smoothly.

Problem Statement

The ability to use language for communication is one of the major characteristics that separates man from other animals. Language allows man to analyze experiences, develop thoughts, communicate ideas, and express feelings. Language skills direct the development of children's thoughts and personalities. It is an essential part of the human experience. Wilkinson, as quoted by Tchudi and Mitchell (1989:269), said,

> His ability to direct rather than to be directed by experience, his ability to establish human relationships, are intimately related to his capacity for language; the frustrations of the

> inarticulate go deep. And it must be bourne in mind that "language" in this context is overwhelmingly the spoken language; even in the (historically) rare literate societies such as our own this remains true. Without oracy human fullfillment is impossible; speech and personality are one.

Oral language consists of listening and speaking, which correspond to reading and writing in written language. Speaking and writing are the expressive components of language; listening and reading are the receptive components. The development of proficiency in oral language is of particular importance to the pre-literate child. Dechant (1982:41) said, "Listening is the first language art that the child develops..." Young children learn their native language by listening to others and copying them. Children gain information about the world not only through direct experience but also by listening to the language that others use to describe and analyze their experience.

In the school setting listening skills are of crucial importance to the pre-literate child's ability to function well. The children receive useful information and learn what is expected by listening to the teacher; they develop relationships with other students by listening and responding to them. Receptive language develops first. Children listen to the examples of effective language that are modeled in the classroom. They then learn expressive language

based on their receptive skills. Dechant (1982:42) said,

> Skill in listening is closely related to proficiency in many academic areas...For children in the lower grades...and perhaps for boys generally, listening is an important means for achievement.

Since listening is a receptive language skill like reading, good listening skills provide excellent preparation for reading. Dechant (1982:43) stated that listening provides the foundation vocabulary and sentence structure that are used in reading and said, "Words most easily read are those that have been heard and spoken." It is clearly of great importance for young children to develop good listening skills.

There are many levels of listening skills. Young children must be able to discriminate phonemes, recognize words in conversation, and follow directions. They must infer meaning from context, anticipate what will be said, and identify the speaker's emotional state. Listeners must recognize the main ideas in a story and become able to repeat the story. Students listen for many reasons: to accumulate information, to communicate feelings, to gain knowledge, to enjoy literature and music, and to interact socially.

In spite of the importance of good listening skills, too little emphasis is placed on direct teaching. Searfoss and Readence (1989:287) said that listening is "...the most neglected language process, in terms of the amount of the instructional time allocated to it." The students at the setting for this practicum showed strong evidence of a deficiency in their listening skills.

In May, 1990, 18 five-year-old students took the Early Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT), Primer I or II (Appendix A, pg. 81). All students were completing their kindergarten year. Ten were from the Blue Room and eight were from another classroom. Eight were girls and 10 were boys. Six were bilingual in the classroom and 12 spoke only English. All children were tested in environment, mathematics, sounds and letters, word reading, and listening to words and stories. Ten were, in addition, tested in sentence reading. Of the 18 children tested, 44 percent (eight) earned their lowest score in listening. Fifty percent of the children received scores below their grade level in listening and 50 percent scored in Stanine 5 or below in listening. These scores demonstrated a deficiency in listening skills.

The target group for this practicum (Appendix B, pg. 82) was listed as 18 in the proposal but was increased to include two additional children who joined the junior kindergarten program just prior to the implementation period. The target group thus consisted of 20 children four or five years old who attended junior kindergarten or kindergarten in the Blue Room. Eighteen of these children had also attended class in the Blue Room during the 1989-90 school year. Fifty percent were girls and 50 percent were boys. Sixty-five percent (13) spoke English with their parents and 35 percent (seven) spoke Spanish. Nine were bilingual in Spanish and English in the classroom. Twelve spoke only English in the classroom but three of these were bilingual in languages other than Spanish. Thus, 60 percent of the target group was bilingual. The writer of this practicum devised strategies to improve their listening skills in the following areas: ability to discriminate English phonemes, ability to recognize a word heard in a story, ability to repeat a short story, and ability to follow verbal directions.

Outcome Objectives

The outcome objectives of the practicum were that, after participating in a listening skills program for a period of 12 weeks, the target group would demonstrate improvement as follows:

...twenty-five percent of the target group would increase by 25 percent their ability to discriminate English phonemes as measured by teacher-designed test and teacher observation,

...twenty-five percent of the target group would increase by 25 percent their ability to recognize a word heard in a story as measured by teacher-designed test and teacher observation,

...fifty percent of the target group would increase by 25 percent their ability to repeat a short story as measured by teacher-designed test, teacher observation, and parent evaluation,

...fifty percent of the target group would increase by 50 percent their ability to follow verbal directions as measured by teacher-designed test, teacher observation, parent evaluation, and self-evaluation,

...one hundred percent of the target group would improve by 25 percent their awareness of the importance of listening skills as measured by teacher observation and self-evaluation,

...one hundred percent of the target group's parents would increase by 25 percent their awareness of the importance of listening skills as measured by parent self-evaluation.

CHAPTER II

Research and Solution Strategy

The Importance of Listening Skills

Listening skills were found to be of great importance because of the enormous amount of time spent listening. Abelleira (1987) cited Rankin's classic 1928 study, which established that people spent 42 percent of their communication time listening, 32 percent speaking, and 25 percent reading or writing. Wolvin (1984) cited Wilt's 1950 study that found elementary students spent 57 percent of their classroom time involved in listening and that 54 percent of that time was spent listening to only one person - the teacher. Norton (1985) estimated that in addition to the time spent listening in the classroom, children also spent 45 percent of their out of school time listening. Stell (1984:14) said,

> Even outside of school, effective listening is central to students' every endeavor. Why? Because listening is an indispensable half of

> the communication equation. If a person speaks, however brilliantly, and no one listens, has any communication really taken place?

In spite of the great amount of time students spent listening, teachers found many had poor skills in this area. One reason for this may have been the 30 hours weekly the average American spent watching television (Wolvin, 1984). Zobairi and Gulley (1989) said that watching TV led to lazy, passive listening. Edleston (1987) observed that children had a tendency to tune out while watching television and only listened to what they found of absorbing interest or very stimulating. While this defense mechanism may have served the child watching television, tuning out in the classroom was disastrous. Edleston also attributed listening problems to poor modeling in the home where parents did not listen to each other attentively and did not demand good listening behavior from their children. Hobbs (1986) thought ineffective listening resulted from poor teaching techniques such as speaking too fast, repeating too much, and not giving the children time to think. It was suggested that giving children 20 seconds to think before raising their hands to answer a question would improve their listening.

Listening was described as a complex activity. The Illinois Speech and Theatre Association (1982) found good listening to be a four step process that included hearing, interpretation of sound, evaluation, and response. Furness as cited by Abelleira (1987) recommended auding as a better term than listening for the sequence that involved 1) hearing, 2) listening, 3) recognizing spoken language, 4) interpreting oral symbols, 5) supplementing meaning and knowledge of the symbols, and 6) being aware of facial expressions and of assumptions not uttered.

Smith (1962:52) said

> Listening is the most difficult of the language arts. It resembles reading in that it is intake of second hand knowledge, but differs in that it demands keener perception at the moment of intake in order to interpret loaded words, inflection, intensity, gestures, facial expressions, and to keep up with the tempo set by the speaker. Listening requires more alert thinking than reading ...

The Federal Government recognized the importance of oral language in 1978 when U.S. Public Law 95-561 was passed. This amended the Primary-Secondary Education Act to include speaking and listening among basic skills (Steil, 1984).

Direct Teaching of Listening Skills

Steil (1984:13-14) said:

> ...listening is a set of learned knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors which can be improved. ...Students don't enter this world (or our classrooms) knowing how to effectively sense, interpret, evaluate, and respond to the extraordinary number of oral messages beamed at them every day.

Wolvin (1894:18) agreed that effective listening skills were not inherent. While educators agreed that listening skills could be taught, opinions varied as to the most effective method. Abelleira (1987) felt listening should be a separate language subject but Winn (1988) thought direct instruction in listening skills must be followed by practice and reinforcement throughout the curriculum. Allen (1984) agreed with Decatur Public School District 61 (1981) that listening instruction should be integrated into other activities.

Edleston (1987) found that 22 kindergarten children improved their listening skills following a 14 week program which included a listening center, group activities, listening walks, auditory-motor activities, structured story time, and motivational incentives.

In researching their program of Structural Listening Activities (SLA), Choate and Rakes (1987) worked with 67 children from grades K-3 over a period

of two years. Each child was given two lessons weekly for five weeks and average listening comprehension increased by nearly one full grade level. Student attention and behavior also improved noticeably during the SLA portion of the lesson. The SLA process consisted of five steps: 1) build concepts by relating content to students' experiences, 2) set a purpose for the listening, 3) read or tell the passage, using visual aids to focus attention and reinforce concepts, and interspersing prediction cues to maintain involvement, 4) ask questions to build literal, interpretive and critical comprehension, and 5) lead children to retell the story and verbalize main points.

The Illinois Speech and Theatre Association (1982) identified two phases of listening readiness which should be evaluated: the preliminary phase and the preparatory phase. The preliminary phase included a general level (attitudes towards school and home environment) and a specific level (health, lighting, and seating arrangements). The four-part preparatory phase preceded each formal listening lesson: 1) stop other activity, 2) focus attention, 3) state listening purposes, and 4) listen.

Smith (1962:52) recommended carefully planned multi-sensory instruction for listening skills. The teacher determined the listening ability of the group and made sure "the material used has 'listenability' both as to content and delivery." Preparation for listening included establishing the purpose for listening, developing vocabulary, listening with eyes as well as ears, and stimulating a feeling of anticipation for the material. Listening was described as a creative act requiring anticipation, relaxation, preparation, receptivity, and critical reaction.

Funk and Funk (1989) agreed that providing a purpose for the proposed listening activity was necessary and also suggested that teachers provide immediate follow-up activities that allowed children to apply the new information. They recommended that teachers use short listening periods throughout the day, vary the speaker, and offer opportunities to listen for appreciation, information, critical analysis, and creative exposure. McDevitt (1990:572) said, "Children need to roam, initiate, build, and experiment." They should not be expected to sit and listen for long periods. Castle (1989) recommended minimizing teacher-dominated talk, using each child's

name frequently, and using more non-directive statements.

Modeling Listening Behavior

Blume (1983:21) said "Modeling is a powerful educational force, and we teachers who listen will have students who listen." It was further recommended that teachers check themselves during the day to avoid such behaviors as doing something else while a child is talking or neglecting eye contact while listening to a child. If teachers listened so poorly that they were not able to repeat what a child had said, they should ask the child to repeat it.

McDevitt (1990) also recommended disclosing difficulties in understanding so children would learn that it was appropriate to ask for clarification. This also let them know when they hadn't been clear in their communication. Listeners must take some responsibility in achieving understanding and resolving confusion in communication.

Winn (1988:145) suggested that "teachers using modeling, either with themselves or the students doing the modeling, can demonstrate examples...of listening procedures." Wolvin (1984) stated that teaching

teachers to listen better was an effective method of improving students' listening skills. Teachers demonstrated good listening techniques themselves by developing indirect teaching methods which allowed the teacher to listen and the students to expand on their experiences. This enhanced the listening experience by providing students with opportunities for inquiry and self-expression as well as varying the source of information, examples, and opinion.

Improving the Listening Environment

McShane and Jones (1990:442-3) offered a number of recommendations to make the classroom environment more condusive to good listening: 1) use short sentences, clear intonation and slow delivery, 2) repeat key words and phrases, 3) present sequential lessons with a small amount of new information each day, 4) encourage children to go to each other for clarification or repetition, 5) have students repeat key messages, 6) give praise and positive reinforcement for good listening, 7) seat poor listeners close to the speaker and encourage eye contact, and 8) present auditory and visual material together, then repeat without visual reinforcement.

Smith (1962:56) enumerated physical hindrances to good listening: 1) room too warm, too cold or too stuffy, 2) uncomfortable seating, 3) fatigue from sitting for too long, 4) bright light that prevents unconscious lip reading, 5) noisy surroundings or interruptions, 6) distracting attire of speaker, and 7) illness or handicap. Psychological hindrances included: 1) egocentricity, 2) prejudice, 3) lack of interest or negative feelings about the topic, 4) poor vocabulary or immaturity, and 5) difficulty with concrete or abstract thinking processes.

Castle (1989:210-11) thought that in the child-centered classroom, "Good teaching is more a function of good listening than it is of good talking." Teachers should consider the ways in which children's answers, possibly wrong, reflected their perception of the situation and level of reasoning ability. Children should be encouraged to rely on their own judgements, take risks, and explore alternative solutions.

Storytelling

Boyd (1980) reported on 15 Australian first graders who were reluctant speakers or expressed themselves poorly. They worked in groups of four or

five for 30 minutes daily over a period of six weeks. First they listened to a taped story, then the teacher retold the story using a listening book consisting of four pictures with short captions to illustrate the main points of the story. Finally the children used the listening book to tell the story back to the teacher. Posttest results documented improved recall of facts and an increased number of words used both in retelling stories and in open ended expression.

Rosenkoetter and Fowler (1987) studied 30 five-year-old prekindergarten children to compare their recall of stories with their recall of descriptive passages. Recall of 100-word stories with 12 clauses and seven story parts was compared to recall of 100-word descriptive passages with 12 clauses and seven elements. While the children could typically recall five of the seven story parts, they rarely remembered topic sentences or main points of the descriptive passages. They also recalled the sequence of events more accurately in the stories. Children who practiced retelling stories used more words in the retelling tasks and in other settings than children in the control group. It was concluded that stories may be an

excellent vehicle for teaching young children and that story retelling may increase language output.

Zobairi and Gulley (1989) discussed many benefits of storytelling:

> Storytelling can promote listening skills, because the special relationship between storyteller and audience presupposes active listening for participation and retelling -- both enjoyed by young children (pg. 8).

Storytelling helped overcome infantile egocentricism because it required the employment of empathy and insight into the motives and actions of others (pg. 9). The child also acquired confidence and self-esteem as a story-teller. Stories told to children should reflect the characteristics of the listening group:

> For example, from three to five years of age children have a brief attention span, undergo rapid language development, are curious and egocentric, have a developing imagination and an imperfect sense of time. They need to feel secure but begin to assert their independence. They need to have problems resolved satisfactorily. The content, themes, and format of stories should reflect these needs and interests (pg. 14).

The teacher chose stories appropriate for the time available and allowed sufficient time for active participation and ample follow-up activities. Visual props were appropriate, especially for young children, but should not detract from the story itself. Participation could be encouraged by the use of chants,

refrains, and songs which contributed directly to the plot (pg. 9).

Lundsteen (1985:12-14) classified a number of children's books according to listening skills and story structure. Her categories were: 1) awareness of sounds; hearing, identifying, guessing, and providing sounds; scary sounds; and loud sounds, 2) valuing of quieter sounds, poetic sounds, and listening to oneself, and 3) listening to others, consideration of others, and problems of the handicapped. The brief descriptions of many of the stories in each category of this bibliography would be helpful in selecting material for listening lessons for young children.

Critical Thinking Skills

Critical thinking skills enhanced listening lessons at every level. Abelleira (1987:17) said:

> Listening is much more than simply paying attention; listening involves facts of reasoning and thinking of a very high order. Students need to know what to think about as they listen. Critical listening precedes critical thinking and is basic to it when students are given lessons orally.

In 1978, Boodt (1984) taught critical listening to remedial readers in fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. The children listened to selections from literature and

concentrated on the following skills: 1) distinguish fact from fancy, 2) decide if a statement is based on fact, opinion, or judgement, 3) distinguish irrelevant from relevant statements, 4) examine, contrast and evaluate statements, 5) recognize appeal to emotional or controversial issues, and 6) evaluate ways the speaker's ideas might apply to other situations. The students improved their abilities in critical listening, critical reading, and general reading comprehension skills as well as increasing their interest in reading. It was concluded that "students who have not mastered independent reading...will benefit from instruction in critical listening as part of their reading instruction" (pg. 394).

Wright and Laminack (1982:136) studied first graders learning about commercials and concluded that they were able to develop critical thinking skills in several areas: 1) identifying words or terms used to persuade viewers to buy products, 2) deciding if claims were fact or opinion, and 3) detecting whether information given in the commercials was complete enough to support their claims.

Hasson (1983) used the technique of aural cloze with 77 kindergarten children once daily for a period

of ten weeks. Meaning-bearing words were omitted as story books were read and the children were asked to supply words that would make sense in the story. Vocabulary was then discussed. The posttests indicated that instruction in aural cloze resulted in increased ability to predict meaning in stories with deleted words.

Winn (1988:144) stated, "Children need to learn to think about and react to what they hear. They need to...question, to sort, to organize, to evaluate, and to choose." McDevitt (1990:574-5) said teachers should encourage critical listening by informing children that speakers may try to mislead, influence, convince or trick them. Students needed to practice detecting errors and reporting what they didn't understand. Winn (1988:145) further suggested:

> Sharing what goes on inside your own head while engaged in listening can enlighten learners. This form of metacognition allows students to learn how the teacher or other students process information as they listen.

Edleston (1987:68) and Abelleira (1987:70) agreed that, to practice decision making skills, children should put together their own lists of rules for good listeners . Winn thought that students should also participate actively in the development of curriculum.

They could make lists of their listening activities and help decide where improvement was needed.

Castle (1989:210) said teachers should encourage the development of critical listening skills by asking "questions that require the child to reflect on previous knowledge, consider alternative problem-solving strategies and use inventiveness..." The handbook from Decatur Public Schools District 61 (1981:13-15) offered listening exercises that require analysis and evaluation from young children.

Solution Strategies

Based on a review of current literature on listening skills and critical thinking skills, the writer chose the following strategies to use in the implementation of this practicum:

Modeling: Modeling of listening skills by teachers, parents, and students was considered an effective teaching strategy by many educators such as Edleston (1987), Hobbs (1986), McDevitt (1990), McShane and Jones (1990), Smith (1962), Winn (1988), and Zobairi and Gulley (1989). This strategy required evaluation and remediation of this writer's listening

behavior in the classroom, evaluation and suggestions for improvement of the listening behavior of other staff in the classroom (Appendix C, pg. 83), development and distribution to parents of suggestions to improve listening behavior in the home (Appendix D, page 84), helping the target group become more aware of good listening skills, guiding the target group in developing their own rules for good listening, and motivating the children to listen to each other.

Improving the Listening Environment: This strategy was especially appropriate in the Montessori classroom. Montessori (1967) taught that young children could "absorb" knowledge in a classroom environment carefully prepared to provide them everything needed for independent learning (Standing, 1962). McShane and Jones (1990), and Smith (1962) offered further guidelines for the preparation of the listening environment.

Structured Listening Activities: Choate and Rakes (1987), Funk and Funk (1989), and Smith (1962) were among the educators who recommended careful structuring of listening activities. This writer incorporated the following guidelines into listening activities and

story time: 1) prepared by relating students' prior experience and knowledge to the subject, 2) reviewed vocabulary as needed, 3) set a purpose for the listening activity, 4) chose material carefully for interest and listenability, 5) limited time spent listening, and 6) included follow-up activities.

Group Activities and Games: These activities were an integral part of working with young children and were easily modified to include listening skills. Edleston (1987), Smith (1962), and Zobairi and Gulley (1898) reported success with this strategy. There were many sources of suggestions for group activities and games to improve listening skills, among them Bannatyne (1973), McCabe (1987), Scott (1968), and Trubowitz (1968). Among the group activities chosen were listening walks to listen to and record sounds that were available in the unique setting of this practicum. This writer prepared a file box of listening games and activities for ready reference (Appendix E, pg. 85).

Listening Lesson: Edleston (1987) reported excellent success with a listening center in the classroom. In the Montessori setting, this was best accomplished as an individual lesson on using the tape

recorder and earphones. The lesson was presented to each member of the target group and was then repeated by each child as desired. A new prerecorded listening lesson was prepared each week to stimulate interest and vary the skills to be practiced.

Storytelling: Boyd (1980), Rosenkoetter and Fowler (1987), and Zobairi and Gulley (1989) reported on their success with storytelling strategies in improving listening skills. Lundsteen (1985) and Pellowski (1984) supplied sources of appropriate stories for young children. The writer observed a professional storyteller, Robin Williamson. This strategy included telling stories to the children, listening to them retell stories, encouraging them to tell original stories to staff and each other, and informing staff and parents of the benefits of including storytelling in their language interaction with the children.

In choosing these strategies, this writer gave priority to the following considerations:

1) The strategy was consistent with the Montessori method;

2) The strategy was easy to incorporate into the existing curriculum and in no way obstructed the accomplishment of existing curriculum goals;

3) The strategy developed the critical thinking and critical listening skills of the children;

4) The strategy was attractive and enjoyable for the children;

5) The strategy had the possibility of permanent inclusion in the existing curriculum and thus encouraged long term improvement of listening skills.

CHAPTER III

Method

During the implementation phase of this practicum, the writer completed the following activities:

1) Made a copy of the practicum proposal available to the Directress and obtained final authorization for the project.

2) Held a brainstorming session with the other teachers in the practicum setting in order to gather suggestions on ways to improve listening skills, ways to improve the listening environment, and ways to model listening skills.

3) Designed a pretest and a posttest for each of the four practicum objectives: discriminating English phonemes, recognizing words in a story, repeating a short story, and following directions (Appendix F, pg. 86).

4) Developed a teacher's evaluation form for bi-weekly evaluation of each child's abilities in each skill.

5) Developed a log for daily recording of listening activities in the classroom (Appendix G, pg. 87).

6) Developed a form to poll parents' opinions on how to improve their children's' listening skills.

7) Developed a form for parents' evaluation of improvement in the following areas: their child's ability to repeat a short story, their child's ability to follow directions, and their own awareness of the importance of listening skills.

8) Developed a checklist for ways to improve the listening environment in the classroom (Appendix H, pg. 88).

9) Acquired a simple tape recorder with earphones.

10) Prepared ten listening lesson tapes and accompanying materials.

11) Developed a file box of games and group activities for improving listening skills (Appendix E, pg. 85). Some of these ideas were original; others were gleaned from the literature, from the brainstorming session, and from parents' suggestions.

12) Prepared five handouts of information on listening skills to distribute to the parents during weeks three, five, seven, nine, and 12 of the implementation (Appendix I, pg. 89).

13) Oriented support staff to the purpose of the project and made the listening activities file box available to them as a resource.

14) Advised staff of the importance of fostering critical listening skills. This included a review of the "Critical Thinking and Self-Reflecting Checklist" and preparation of a list of specific suggestions for use in the classroom (Appendix J, pg. 90).

15) Prepared well-known children's stories for aural cloze activities.

16) Prepared stories and fairy tales for storytelling.

Working with the Target Group

The writer monitored the progress of the practicum throughout the implementation phase by the use of the daily log and the bi-weekly evaluation of each child. The implementation plan allowed the writer flexibility in adjusting to the needs and interests of the

children. Mid-course corrections indicated by new ideas or negative reactions from staff, parents, or students were implemented within the framework presented below. Although each objective was assigned a two-week period for concentrated work, all objectives were pursued during the entire implementation phase as a result of teacher modeling and student interest. For example, the writer began to model storytelling at least once weekly from the beginning of the implementation period, although weeks eight and nine were designated for concentration on the storytelling objective. Likewise, lessons on like beginning sounds from week three remained accessible to the children for the remainder of the implementation period.

Week One: The writer administered the pretest to each child individually during work time. In order to disturb the classroom routine as little as possible and to isolate the child being tested, the testing was done in the patio outside the classroom. To minimize test anxiety, the test was presented as a special enjoyable activity. By isolating the pretest from the classroom, it was also possible to have all the children retellthe

same story in part three, thus raising the reliability of the comparative results. During Week One, the writer also distributed a letter that introduced the project to the parents, asked for their observations of their child's listening habits and their ideas on how to improve listening skills, and invited them to participate in the project by visiting the classroom to play a listening game or tell a story. Four parents responded by returning the questionnaire and two others visited the classroom to read stories.

Week Two: The writer introduced the concepts of ears, hearing, and listening during line time. Group activities included divergent thinking on the topic of "What are ears good for?", coloring pictures of animals' ears; and making a telephone of paper cups and string. Art Day: Children made a hat with bunny, elephant, or puppy ears.

Week Three: Phonemes. During line time, the writer directed the children's attention to concepts of silence, soft and loud noise, music, and speech; sang the "abc" song with sounds of letters instead of their names; and compared and contrasted the beginning and

ending sounds of words. During work time, the writer presented the listening lesson to each child in the target group. This was a demonstration of how to use the tape recorder and earphones, but the earphones broke so frequently that their use was soon discontinued. The taped listening activities proved to be enjoyable to the children and even without the use of earphones were not disruptive to the classroom. A new tape was added to the lesson each week. Art Day: The target group cut and pasted pictures of words beginning with their favorite sound.

Week Four: Phonemes. During line time, the writer guided the children in developing their own brief list of rules for good listening. Group activities: matched object to beginning letter, played rhyming games, and played games to demonstrate listening rules. Art Day: Recorded the sounds of the classroom.

Week Five: Words in a Story. During story time, aural cloze was introduced using well-known children's books. Only nouns or verbs located at the end of a sentence or clause were omitted. Group activities

focused on repetitive stories in which the children actively participated with animal sounds, clapping, etc. Children began to choose the listening games they liked to play. Art Day: The children listened to a familiar story, then identified and illustrated their favorite words.

Week Six: Words in a Story. During playground time, members of the target group recorded the sounds in the courtyard. Group activities included evaluating whether a sentence was silly or not and identifying mystery sounds. During story time, aural cloze was extended by omitting adjectives and adverbs as well as nouns and verbs and by varying the position in the sentence of the omitted words. Art Day: Read poems and nursery rhymes which the children acted out. Members of the target group took turns acting as narrator of familiar works such as "Jack be Nimble" and "Little Miss Muffet".

Week Seven: Following Directions. During line time, the children played games such as "Simon Says" that required giving and following directions. The children compiled lists of their favorite sounds,

their favorite times for listening, and their favorite people to listen to. Art Day: The writer organized the children into pairs and gave one child precut shapes to arrange and glue according to verbal directions from the other child. Then they traded roles. Each child conceived of an idea and gave directions on how to do it, then practiced following directions to execute someone else's idea. This project was very successful and was repeated spontaneously by some of the children during the weeks that followed.

Week Eight: Following Directions. During playground time, the sounds on the playground were recorded. During line time, work continued with games such a "Mother, May I?" that required giving and following directions. During story time, children were asked to infer meaning and give opinions as well as recall facts. They also exercised critical thinking skills by completing the sentence: If I were a (cat) , I would (sleep all day) . Art Day: The plan to make guitars out of shoe boxes and rubber bands or maracas out of paper plates and beans was

postponed to Week 10 because of conflict with preparation for the school Art Show.

Week Nine: Storytelling. During story time, the writer told a familiar story or fairy tale instead of reading it. The children then retold the story as a group. Some also told their own original story to the group. During line time, each child told the group something about Spring Break and something about going shopping. The plan to use work time to help each child make a two-to-four page book of an original story with illustrations was modified due to increased demands on the writer related to change in staff. Instead, on Art Day the writer worked with small groups of children to write and illustrate several original stories. This was a successful mid-course change and the resulting books were read again and again by the children. The plan to make a puppet of a favorite story book character was postponed to Week 11.

Week Ten: Storytelling. Plans for a field trip in small groups to the 7-11 to listen to sounds were cancelled because staff changes in the practicum setting made it impossible for this writer to leave the

classroom for an extended period. Instead, small groups of children were taken on listening walks to different areas of the school grounds to record sounds for the listening lesson. During story time, the children continued to tell and listen to stories. The writer asked questions that demanded evaluation and synthesis as well as recall of information: What would you do if...? Why did that happen? What will happen next? Also, this writer sometimes read the beginning of a well known children's story and asked the children to finish it. On Art Day, the children made maracas out of decorated paper plates and beans. No one chose to make a guitar out of a shoe box and rubber bands.

Week 11: The Festival of Sound planned for this week was postponed until week 12 because of conflicting activities related to the visit of an evaluating team from the Florida Council of Independent Schools. The name of the festival was changed to "Listen to Us Learn" and the parents were invited to participate. During the week, listening activities using several strategies were easily incorporated into the daily routine. On Art Day, the children made finger puppets

to depict favorite story book or fairy tale characters. This was a very successful activity and resulted in prolonged spontaneous creative storytelling by the children.

Week 12: Posttest and "Listen to Us Learn." During work time this writer posttested each child individually, following the same routine used for pretesting in Week One. An evaluation form was distributed to the parents. The field trip to the beach to listen to or record sounds was cancelled because of increased demands on this writer's time due to change in staff. During the week, the children helped plan "Listen to Us Learn" and discussed stories to tell, books to read, puppet shows to give, songs to sing, and musical instruments to bring in. On Art Day, the children dressed in story book costumes and "Listen to Us Learn" was held in the courtyard during afternoon work time. Many parents attended to participate and to help with supervision. There were areas for reading, following directions, storytelling, puppets, the listening lesson, musical instruments, and favorite listening games such as "Who Am I, Mr. Ghost?" This

writer led the children in a short demonstration of some group listening lessons. Then the children chose activities to demonstrate to their parents or participate in with their classmates. It was a colorful and enthusiastic culmination for the implementation period.

Evaluation

The results of pretests, posttests, and parent, teacher, and student evaluations were compiled to arrive at a final evaluation of the effectiveness of the practicum project on improving the listening skills of the target group. Overall results were very positive; all target students improved their overall scores (Appendix K, pg. 92). In fact, all but one student scored higher on the posttest than any student scored on the pretest. Pretest scores ranged from 33 percent to 79 percent and posttest scores ranged from 76 percent to 98 percent. Improvement in overall scores averaged 59 percent and ranged from 20 percent to 184 percent improvement.

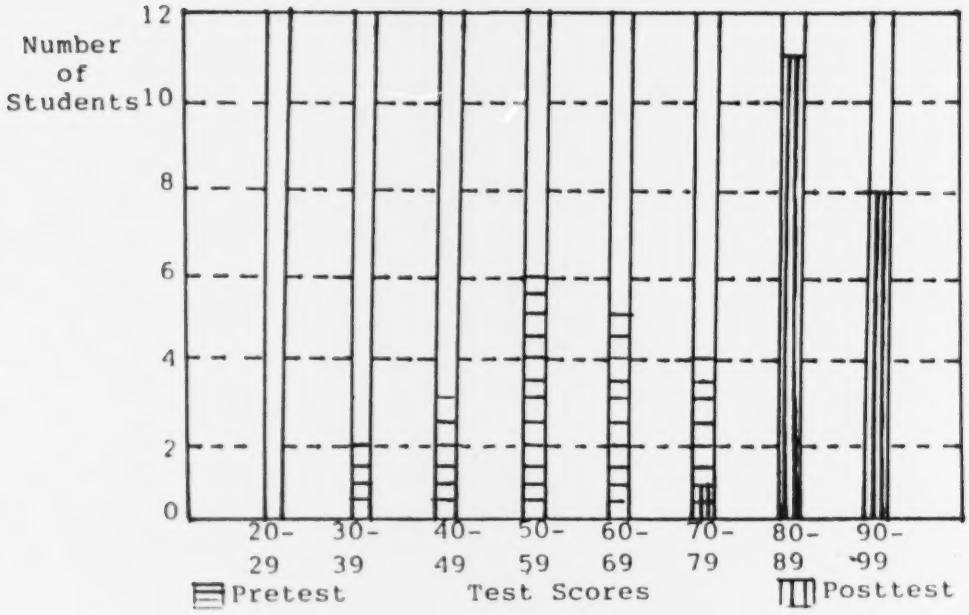

Figure 1
Overall Scores on Pretests and Posttests

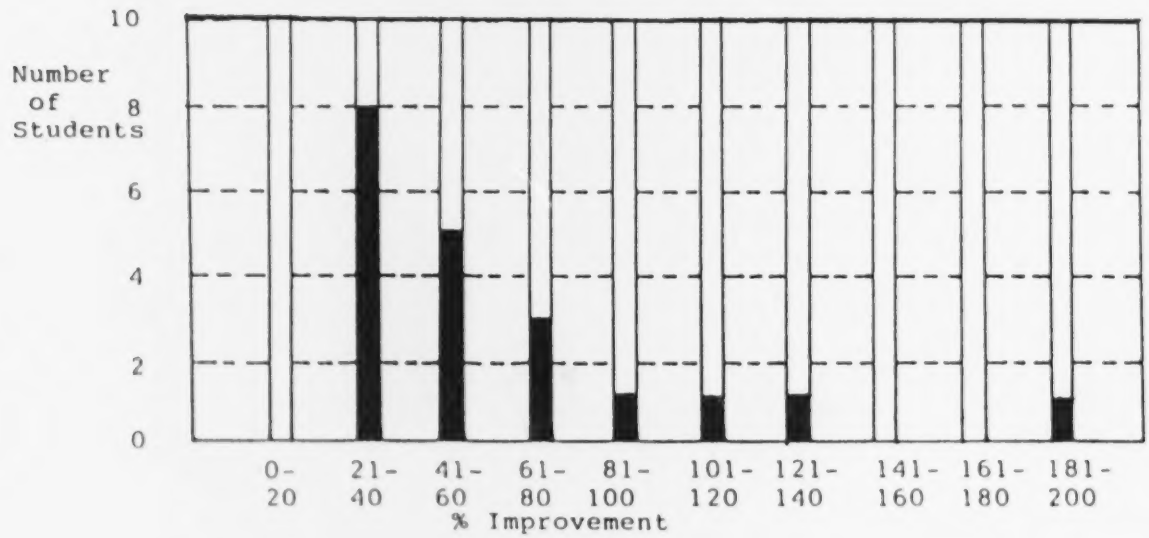

Figure 2

Percentage of Improvement on
Overall Scores

Students also improved their scores dramatically on the sub tests for specific listening skills. The outcome objective for discriminating English phonemes was 25 percent improvement by 25 percent of the target group. Actual results in part one of the teacher made test (Appendix L, pg. 93) exceeded this: seventy-five percent of the target group improved their scores by 25 percent or more. All targeted students improved by at least 15 percent; average increase was 80 percent.

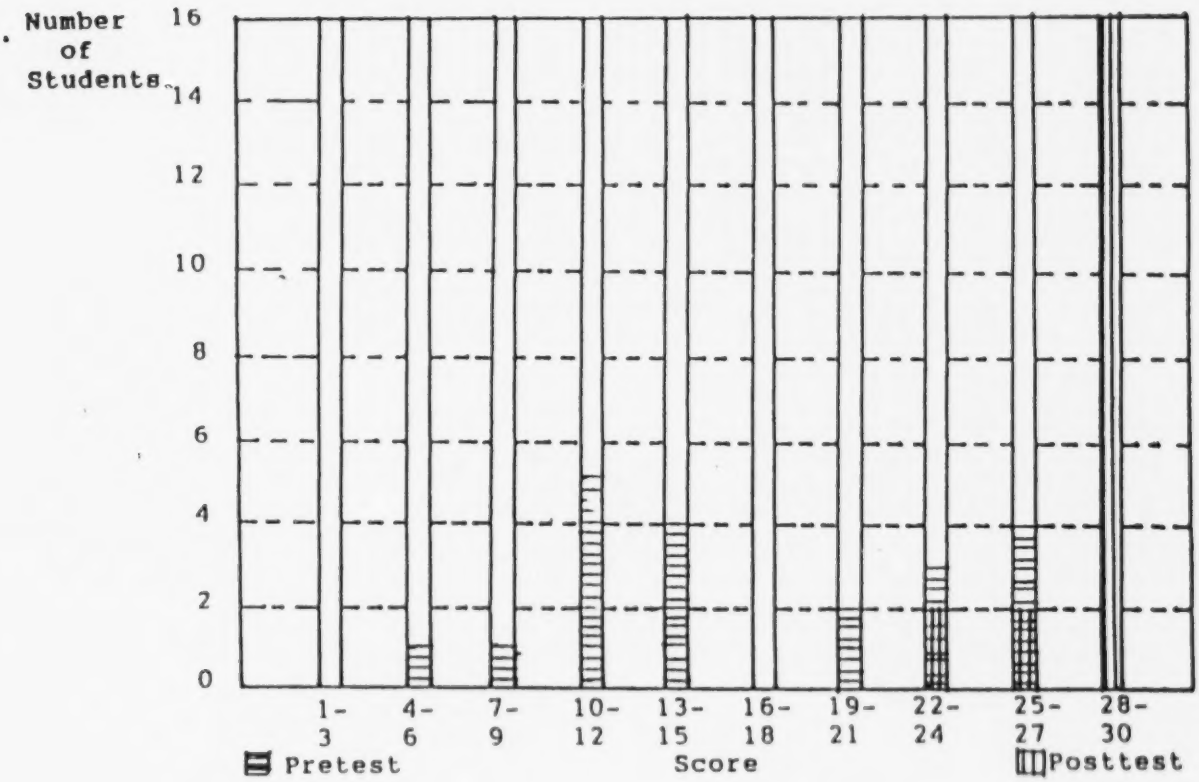

Figure 3

Pretest and Posttest Scores on Part One: Discriminating English Phonemes

The outcome objective for the ability to recognize a word heard in a story was 25 percent improvement in 25 percent of the target group. Actual results in part two of the teacher made test (Appendix L, pg. 93) exceeded this: fifty-five percent of the target group improved their scores by at least 25 percent. Average posttest score was 17.5 out of 20; average improvement was 34 percent.

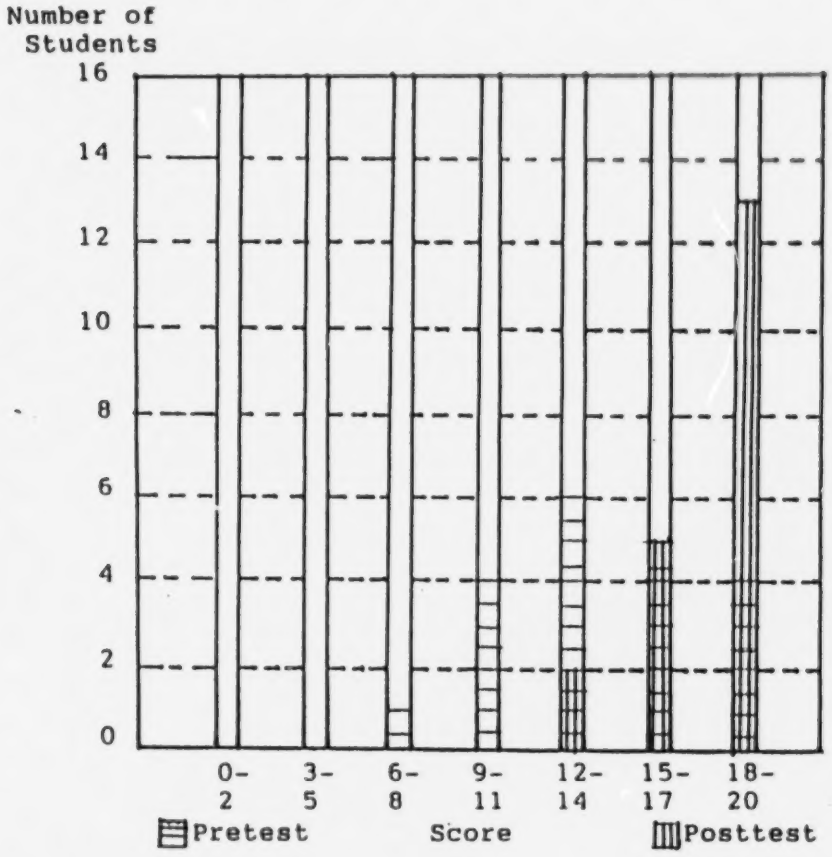

Figure 4

Pretest and Posttest Scores on Part Two: Recognizing Words in a Story

However, not all the students in the target group improved their test scores in part two. Twenty percent of the students showed no change and five percent of the students scored lower in the posttest than in the pretest. Possible explanations for these negative results include poor attention due to slight ill health or unavoidable distractions in the test site, such as a squirrel in the tree.

The greatest improvement in specific listening skills occurred in the ability to retell a story. Average improvement in scores for part three of the teacher made test (Appendix M, pg. 94) was over 500 percent! On the pretest, 20 percent of the students scored only three percent on this sub test and another 25 percent scored under 33 percent. These students either declined to attempt to retell the story or could remember very little. On the posttest, no student scored lower than 50 percent, twenty percent of the students improved their test scores by at least 2000 percent, and an additional 40 percent improved by 100 percent or more. The outcome objective for this skill was 25 percent improvement in 50 percent of the target group but, in fact, a total of 95 percent of the target group improved their test scores by at least 25 percent.

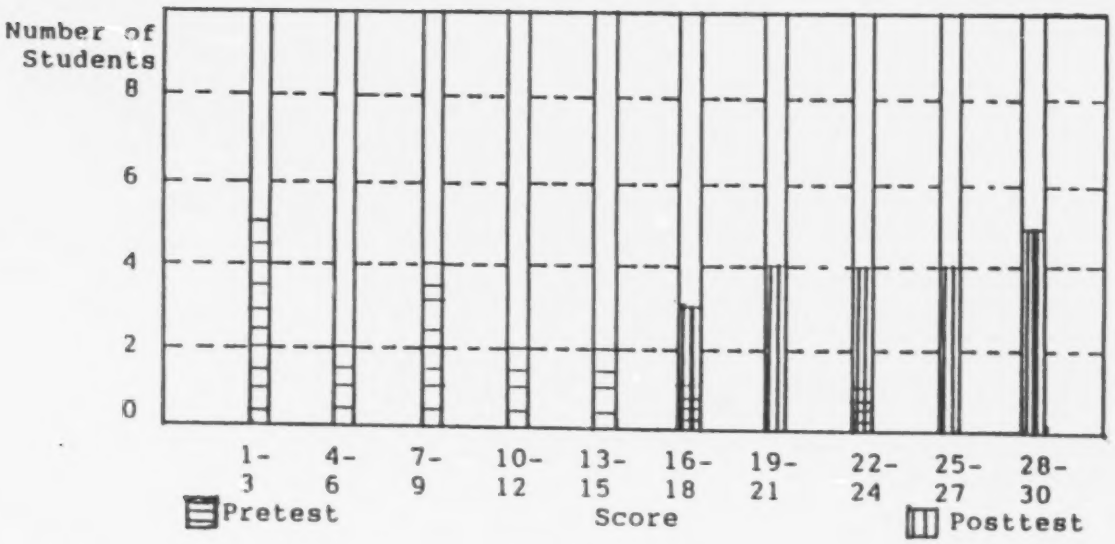

Figure 5

Pretest and Posttest Scores on Part Three: Retelling a Story

Evaluation by parents and by the children themselves also exceeded the projected outcome for retelling a story. Only 25 percent of the parents responded, possibly because the questionnaire was distributed during a time of great anxiety about a contagious disease that affected the school population and threatened pregnancies in several families. Of the responding parents, 80 percent felt their children had improved by at least 25 percent in this area. Ninety-five percent of the children in the target group rated their improvement in retelling a story at 50 percent.

The stated outcome objective for the ability to follow directions was that 50 percent of the target group would improve by 50 percent. Ninety-five percent of the students rated their own improvement at 50 percent. Of the responding parents, 80 percent thought their children had improved by at least 50 percent in following directions. Thus, evaluations made by the students themselves and by their parents exceeded the outcome objectives. However, improvement in scores on the teacher made tests did not meet the projected levels; only five percent of the target group improved by 50 percent in part four (Appendix M, pg. 94).

This failure to meet outcome objectives was probably caused by insufficient range in part four of the test. Only ten percent of the target group tested low enough on the pretest to be able to show a 50 percent increase on the posttest. Scores on the posttests were very high: eighty-five percent of the target group scored at least 95 percent and the average score was 96 percent. The tests were designed to be enjoyable for the children, to be short enough to be administered to the entire target group in one week of work time, and to be well within the capacities of the children. These objectives were met but part four, which measured the ability to follow directions, was too easy for the children. Additional three-part

directions would have increased the range of the test and made greater improvement measurable.

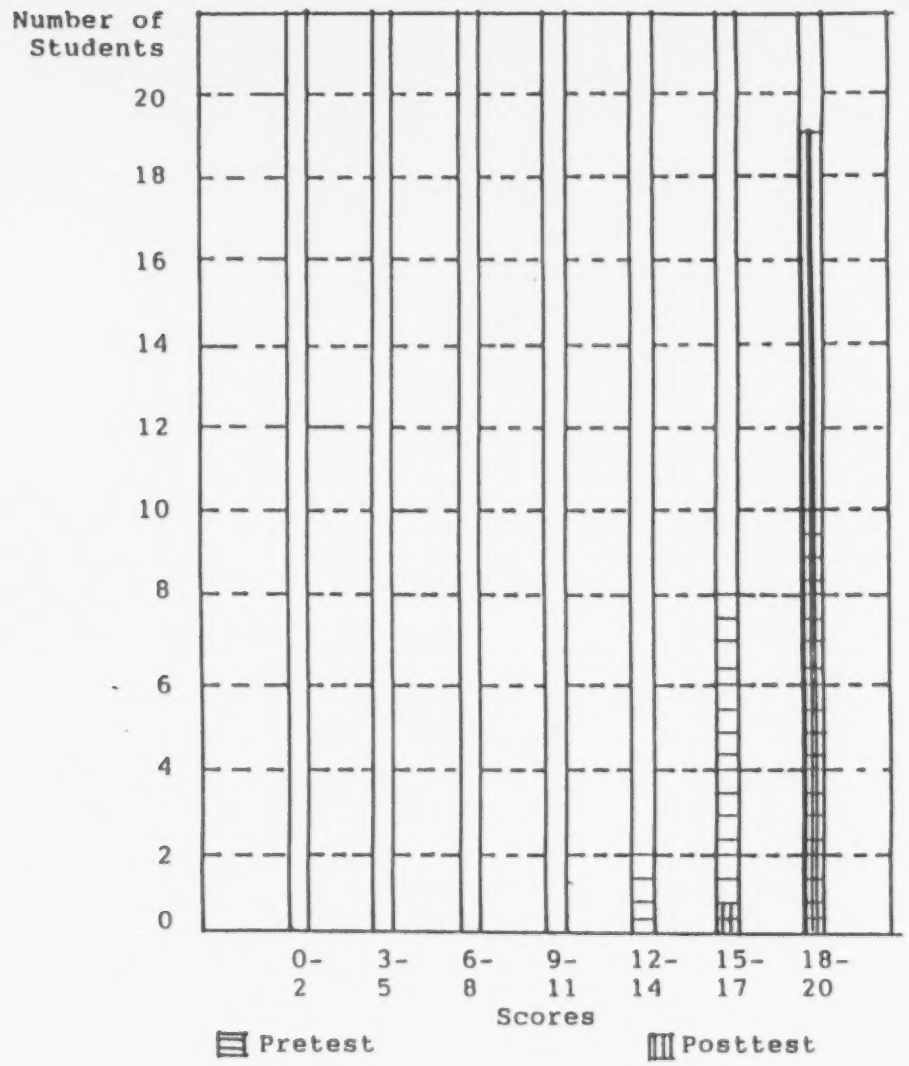

Figure 6

Pretest and Posttest Scores for Part Four: Following Directions

The students in the target group and their parents all felt they had increased their awareness of the importance of listening skills. The outcome objective was for 100 percent of each group to increase their awareness by 25 percent. Of the responding parents, 100 percent rated their improved awareness at 50 percent. Of the students in the target group, 90 percent thought they had improved by 50 percent and ten percent rated themselves with ten percent improvement. This measurement resulted in an average 43 percent improvement in the student's self-evaluation of their awareness of the importance of listening skills.

Analysis of the overall test scores in relation to demographic characteristics of the target group resulted in further evidence of the effectiveness of the practicum strategies in improving listening skills in young children. Girls scored higher on both the pretest and the posttest but boys' rate of improvement was higher (Appendix N, pg. 95) so that the girls' average posttest score was only six points higher than the boys'. Children who spoke to their parents in English scored higher on both the pretest and posttest but children who spoke Spanish with their parents

improved at a higher rate (Appendix O, pg. 96) so that the difference in average posttest score was only three points . Bilingual children scored higher on both the pretest and posttest but monolingual children improved at a higher rate (Appendix P, pg. 97) so that the difference in average posttest score was only one point. These results indicate that the groups with weaker skills - Spanish-speakers, boys, and monolingual children - benefited most from the intervention. This is a very positive indication that intervention resulted in individual children with higher listening skills and a class with a more uniform level of skills.

Finalization

This writer prepared appropriate materials for the parent workshop (Appendix Q, pg. 98) and invited the parents of all the children attending the school. The listening skills workshop for parents was presented during the school day when the children were in class. Although only six parents attended, others expressed interest and requested that a presentation on the topic be offered in the evening so more working parents could

attend. As a result, an evening workshop on listening skills is scheduled to be included in the school's ongoing program for parent education.

Response to the workshop for educators was also positive. Teachers and administrators from the practicum setting, the local public elementary school, and two local private schools were invited. Eleven educators, representing three of the four schools, attended the workshop. Four others were unable to attend the workshop but requested a copy of the 35-page listening skills handbook (Appendix R, pg. 99).

In summary, the classroom strategies, information distribution, and outreach activities described in this report were effective in accomplishing the goals of the practicum. Most of the projected outcome objectives were realized and exceeded. The one exception was probably due to flaws in the testing, not in the strategies employed. All students improved their overall performances, awareness of the need for listening skills among the students in the target group and their parents increased, information about techniques to improve listening skills in the home and in the classroom was successfully distributed, and the

curriculum for listening skills and critical thinking skills at the practicum setting was enriched.

The final step in the practicum was to prepare and submit this final report.

CHAPTER IV

Results

The effectiveness of the intervention in accomplishing the objectives of this practicum was measured by means of a teacher made pretest and posttest. Each child in the target group was individually tested during the first week of the implementationtion period and again during the last week. All students in the target group improved their overall test scores (Appendix K, pg. 92). Average improvement was 59 percent. This test consisted of four sections which corresponded to the four areas of listening skills which were targeted for improvement.

Part One: Discriminating English Phonemes. 1) Children were asked to point to the object or picture that corresponded to the word spoken by the teacher. Minimal pairs were used such as pan/pen, watch/wash, shave/shake, or gum/gun. 2) Children heard four words and were asked to identify which of the last three began with the same sound as the first word. For example, dog---duck, rabbit, goose.

The outcome objective for part one was for 25 percent of the target group to improve by 25 percent. However, fully 75 percent of the target group improved by at least 25 percent, and 40 percent improved by at least 100 percent. Average increase in posttest score over pretest score was 102 percent (Appendix L, pg 93).

Part Two: Recognizing Words in a Story. The teacher read an unfamiliar story about one minute in length. The student was asked to reply yes or no in response to a list of words that may have occurred in the story. Nonsense words and non-occuring rhyming words were included in the list as well as meaning-bearing words that did occur in the story.

The outcome objective for part two was that 25 percent of the target group would improve their scores by 25 percent. Actual results were even better: fifty-five percent of the target group improved their scores by at least 25 percent (Appendix L, pg. 93).

Part Three: Retell a Short Story. A story was told having 75-90 words arranged in eight parts as follows (after Rosenkoetter and Fowler, 1987):

Characters	Two boys, Bob and Joe,
Location	went to the circus.
Purpose	They wanted to see the elephants.
Problem	When they got to the gate, they found out that they had

	forgotten their money so they couldn't buy the tickets.
Reaction	Joe wanted to go back home and get their wallets but Bob had another idea.
Action	"If we carry water to the elephants, will you let us see the show?" he asked.
Consequence	"OK," said the man. "That's a good idea."
Resolution	So the boys got to see the elephants up real close and then they got to see the show.

The child was then asked to retell the story. Each part remembered earned three points. Correctness in sequencing earned up to six points for a total of thirty points possible for the story. Each child was tested individually outside the classroom so the story above was used for all the pretests and another story following the formula was used for all the posttests.

The outcome objective for part three was that 50 percent of the target group would improve their scores by 25 percent. This rate of improvement was exceeded by actual test results: ninety-five percent of the target group improved their test scores by at least 25 percent and 65 percent of the target group improved by at least 100 percent (Appendix M, pg. 94). One hundred percent of the children rated their own improvement at 25 percent or more.

Part Four: Following directions. 1) Children were shown a number of familiar objects displayed at random on a table. They were asked to follow one-, two-, and three-step directions. For example, one-step directions were "Please put the ball in the basket," two-step directions were "Please put the ball in the basket and the basket on the red circle," and three step directions were "Please put the star on the circle, then put the triangle next to the basket and the dog with the cat." 2) This activity was repeated with one-, two-, and three-step directions for body movement such as "Please stand up, turn around twice, and walk to the tree" (three-part directions).

The outcome objective for part four was that 50 percent of the target group would improve their scores by 50 percent. However, only five percent of the target group improved their scores by 50 percent due to very high scores in both the pretest and the posttest (Appendix M, pg. 94). Part four of the test did not provide enough range to accurately measure the children's improvement. More three-part directions should have been included to make part four of the test difficult enough to accurately meaure the abilities of the children in the target group.

The posttest included a self-evaluation on how much the child had improved in following directions since "we started learning to listen better." Choices were: not at all, a little better (10 per cent), quite a lot better (25 percent), or very much better (50 percent). Ninety-five percent of the target group rated their own improvement at 50 percent, again exceeding the outcome objective.

In addition to the pretest and posttest administered to each child, this writer recorded an observation and evaluation from one to five points for each child in each skill on the bi-weekly evaluation form. All children improved by at least two points in each area (Appendix S, pg. 100) over the course of the implementation period. This writer also reviewed the Critical Thinking and Self-Reflection Checklist periodically during the implementation period in order to increase the extent of higher order thinking operations in the practicum setting (Appendix T, pg. 102).

At the end of the implementation period, the parents evaluated their child's improvement in the ability to follow directions and ability to repeat a short story. Eighty percent of the responding parents

reported that their child had improved by at least 25 percent in retelling a story and by 50 percent in following directions, thus exceeding the outcome objectives in each area.

Parents and children also evaluated themselves on the increase in their awareness of the need for listening skills. The outcome objective was that 100 percent of each group would increase their awareness by 25 percent. All the responding parents rated their increased awareness at 25 percent or more. Ninety percent of the students rated their increase in awareness at 50 percent but 10 percent rated themselves at only 10 percent improvement. This resulted in an average increase of 43 percent. Teacher observation rated 100 percent of the children with 25% increase in their awareness of the need for listening skills so this outcome objective was considerered to have been accomplished.

The results of the practicum project were very favorable. All of the outcome objectives were met or exceeded as measured by at least one method: test results or teacher, parent or student evaluation. Failure to achieve the projected improvement in test scores for following directions was due to insufficient

range in part four of the test itself but the outcome objective for following directions was exceeded when measured by parent and student evaluation.

Although all students in the target group improved their overall test scores, forty percent failed to improve their score in one sub test (Appendix L, pg. 93 and Appendix M, pg. 94). Of these eight students, seven scored 80 percent or more on the sub test in question, so failure to improve was not significant. The remaining case, S two in part two of the test, indicates a need for more careful monitoring of individual students in individual skill areas to assure progress. Likewise, two students (S 16 and S 18) showed negative improvement in their scores in one sub test (Appendix L, pg. 93 and Appendix M, pg. 94). However, each scored over 80 percent on the sub test in question and more than 80 percent on the overall test scores (Appendix K, pg. 92). These high scores indicate that distractions in the testing situation probably contributed to their lowered posttest scores and that the isolated incidences of failure to improve on sub tests were not significant to the overall success of the project.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

This project was made available to parents of the target group, parents of other children attending the school, educators and administrators at the school, and educators and administrators at two other private schools and one public school in the immediate area. During the implementation phase of the practicum, hand-outs of information about listening skills and suggestions to improve them were distributed bi-weekly to the parents of the target group and the educators in the school (Appendix I, pg. 89). At the end of the implementation phase, a listening skills workshop was presented for all interested parents and information on listening activities for the home was distributed (Appendix Q, pg. 98). A second listening workshop was presented for teachers and administrators. A 35-page manual of information, lesson plans, and suggestions for listening activities in the classroom (Appendix R, pg. 99) was distributed at the workshop and also made

available to other interested educators who were unable to attend the workshop. As a result of interest generated by the project, a yearly listening skills workshop was added to the school's ongoing program of parent education.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

SAT Scores in Listening for 1989-90
Kindergarten Students

Student 89-90	Language in class	Listening Stanine	Lowest score Listening ?	Grade Equiv.
S89- 1	English	8	no	3.3
S89- 2	Bilingual	7	no	2.5
S89- 3	Bilingual	5	yes	K.4
S89- 4	Bilingual	6	no	1.5
S89- 5	English	4	yes	Pre-K
S89- 6	Bilingual	6	no	1.2
S89- 7	Bilingual	1	yes	Pre-K
S89- 8	Bilingual	2	yes	Pre-K
S89- 9	Bilingual	3	yes	Pre-K
S89-10	English	9	no	2.8
S89-11	English	3	yes	Pre-K
S89-12	Bilingual	4	no	K.2
S89-13	English	6	no	1.7
S89-14	English	8	no	2.9
S89-15	English	6	no	1.1
S89-16	English	5	yes	K.4
S89-17	Bilingual	3	yes	Pre-K
S89-18	English	6	no	1.5

Appendix B

Demographic Characteristics
and Language Use of
Target Group

Student	Age on 12/1/90	Sex	Language used with parents	Language in Class
S 1	5	F	English	Bilingual
S 2	4	M	Spanish	Bilingual
S 3	5	F	English	English
S 4	5	M	English	English
S 5	5	M	Spanish	Bilingual
S 6	5	M	Spanish	Bilingual
S 7	4	F	English*	English
S 8	4	M	English	English
S 9	4	M	Spanish	Bilingual
S10	4	M	English	English
S11	4	F	English	English
S12	4	F	Spanish	Bilingual
S13	4	M	Spanish	Bilingual
S14	4	F	English	English
S15	4	F	English#	English
S16	4	F	English+	English
S17	4	F	Spanish	Bilingual
S18	4	M	English	English
S19	4	M	English	English
S20	4	F	English	Bilingual

* Also observed speaking French.
# Also observed speaking Italian.
+ Also observed speaking Polish.

Appendix C

Modeling Listening Behavior in the Classroom

1) Each person in contact with children can help them to learn effective listening techniques by serving as a model for good listening. As teachers, we can do a lot to help the children listen better by simply setting a good example with our own listening habits. They learn a lot by watching us. The children will be better listeners if we listen attentively to them and to other adults.

2) Make frequent eye contact to help indicate your interest. You may have to sit down to get to the child's level. Be aware that the length of eye contact that indicates interest and attention varies among cultures. Intense eye contact may make a child feel that you are staring.

3) If you are not able to understand what has been said, ask the speaker to repeat the message. It is the responsibility of the good listener to communicate his understanding or lack of it. We all need to know if we are "getting through."

4) Don't interrupt! Let the speakers finish their sentences, even if you think you already understand the message. It is especially important for children to express themselves in complete thoughts and to practice explaining their ideas. A good listener can help the children think more clearly and express their ideas more carefully.

5) Ask leading questions of the speaker. Indicate your interest and understanding of the message by asking for more information or for the speaker's feelings about it.

6) The children can also serve as models for good listening. Praise good listeners. Ask the child speaker to repeat key phrases or words to ensure complete understanding within the group.

7) Encourage the children to listen attentively to each other. Avoid restating a child's point - let another child do it. Ask the children to respond to a classmate's message: How do you feel about that? Did anything like that ever happen to you?

8) Encourage the children to tell stories and express their opinions and viewpoints. This gives the teacher a chance to model attentive listening and varies the speakers within the classroom.

Appendix D

Modeling Good Listening Behavior in the Home

LET'S LISTEN TO THE KIDS!

SET A GOOD EXAMPLE!

As parents and teachers, we can do a lot to help the children listen better by simply setting a good example with our own listening habits. They learn a lot by watching us. They will be better listeners if they see us listening attentively to family members and other adults.

HELP BUILD SELF-ESTEEM!

We can help the children build strong self-esteem by listening carefully to them and demonstrating that what they have to say is important. Make frequent eye contact to help indicate your interest. If you are not able to understand what the children have told you, ask them to repeat it. It is the responsibility of the good listener to communicate his understanding or lack of it. We all need to know if we are "getting through."

LISTEN 'TIL THE VERY END!

Let them finish their sentences, even if you think you already understand the message. It is especially important for children to express themselves in complete thoughts and to practice explaining their ideas. A good listener can help the children think more clearly and express their ideas more carefully.

GOOD LISTENERS MAKE GOOD READERS!

Children's reading and writing skills are based on their speaking and listening skills. They easily read words that are already a part of their listening and speaking vocabulary. Their ability to express themselves in speech forms the basis for their ability to express themselves in writing. Listening to them now will help them develop communication skills they will need throughout their lives.

Appendix E

Sample from File Box of Listening Activities

I Don't See What You See — McCabe - p. 127

Materials: two identical sets of objects such as toys, dolls, trucks, balls, marbles, etc.
A screen of some type - a large open book will serve the purpose

Purpose: Practice giving and following directions.

Procedure: Give the child one set of materials and take the other set yourself behind the screen. As you arrange them into any pattern of your choice, give the child clear and specific description of the way that you are manipulating the toys: "I am putting the red truck beside the blue marble and the block is in the truck." The child is to arrange his set of materials in the same way you do. When you finish the arrangement, take the screen away to see if your pattern matches the child's.

Who Am I, Mr. Ghost? — original

Materials: a small sheet or blanket to put over the child's head in order to limit his vision and give the feeling of a ghost costume.

Purpose: Practice auditory discrimination for the "ghost." Also develops expressive language for the "Mystery Man."

Procedure: Have one child, the "ghost", sit in a chair with a sheet over his head to obscure his vision and focus his listening. Silently choose another child, the "mystery man", to will say something about himself without giving his name. For example, "I am a girl with red hair who loves to read." End with the standard question: "Who am I, Mr. Ghost?" The child on the chair must guess who the "Mystery man" is. When he is identifled, the "mystery man" becomes the "ghost" and the "ghost" chooses the nest "mystery man."

Appendix F

Sample Page from Posttest

Posttest Part 4: Following Directions

A. Arrange a number of objects at random on the table. Have the child say the name of each. "I am going to give you some directions to follow. Please listen carefully and do what I say."

One-step directions. (1 point each)

Put the ball in the pan, please. _____

Make the horse run, please. _____

Put the man on the red box, please. _____

_____ (3)

Two-step directions. (2 points each)

Please put the ring on the chair
and put the chair beside the key. _____

Please put the baby on the car
and the apple on the cookie. _____

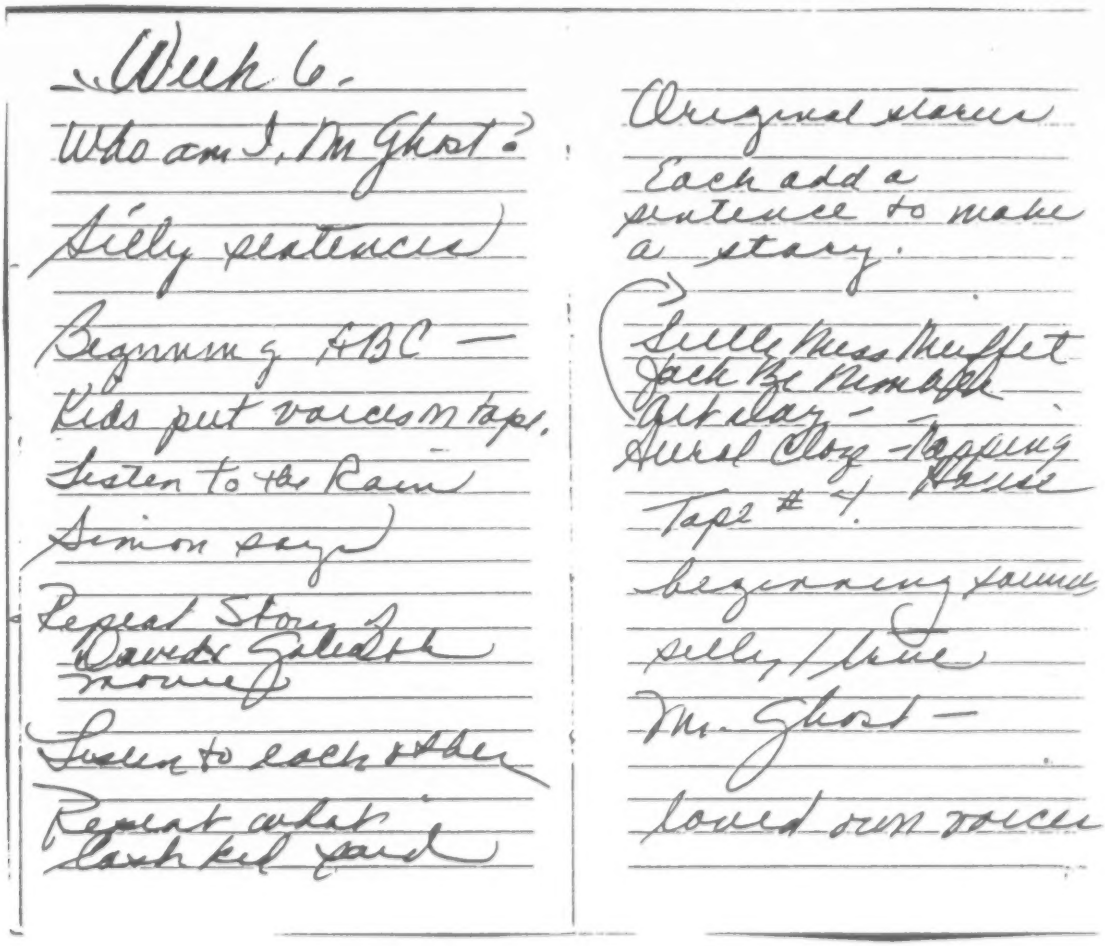
_____ (4)

Three-step directions. (3 points each)

Please put the bunny on the mat and
the block in the basket. Then put
the dinosaur beside the bunny. _____ (3)

Appendix G

Sample Page of Daily Log of
Listening Activities



Week 6.

Who am I, Mr Ghost?

Silly sentences

Beginning ABC —
Kids put voices on tape.
Listen to the Rain
Simon says

Repeat Story
David's Silliness
movie

Listen to each other
Repeat what
each kid said

Original stories
Each add a
sentence to make
a story.

Silly Miss Muffet
Jack Be Nimble
Get day -
Hurt Dog - Napping
Tape # 4 House

beginning sounds
silly / time
Mr. Ghost —

loved own voices

Appendix H

Improving the Listening Environment in the Classroom

1) Signal the beginning of a listening activity. Use a soft bell, turn off the lights, or develop a standard introductory statement to be consistently delivered in the same tone of voice: "Please get ready to listen now."
2) Hold a brief sharing time or allow the children to chat before beginning a listening activity. If they have had a chance to talk, they will be better able to listen.
3) Make eye contact.
4) Minimize distractions by turning off the lights.
5) Make sure the children are comfortable. They may need to put on sweaters, get a drink, or go to the bathroom before they can concentrate on listening
6) Arrange the seating to maximize the probability of good listening.
7) Seat poor listeners close to the speaker.
8) Make behavioral requirements clear.
9) Work with the children to develop their own list of listening rules. They can make posters to illustrate their rules.
10) Choose attractive materials for listening activities.
11) Use short sentences, clear intonation, and slow delivery.
12) Develop a pleasant speaking voice. Learn to speak below the noise level of the classroom instead of making futile attempts to shout above it. The children will get quiet to hear what you have to say.
13) Use an optimal number of repetitions.
14) Recognize good listening behavior. Give verbal praise to good listeners. Use stamps, stickers, or other rewards.
15) Use short listening periods.
16) Vary the speakers in the class. You can use records or tapes some of the time. Encourage the children to listen to each other.

Appendix I

Sample Parent Handout

POSITIVE MESSAGES

Communicating positive messages to your child makes good sense in two ways: instructions are more easily understood and the child's self-image is enhanced. Give the child a positive alternative to unacceptable behavior. Tell them what you would like them to do instead of what you do not like. Tell them when they are doing it right. If you ask a child a question, you should be ready to accept "no" for their answer.

Positive message	Try to avoid
Dig in the sand.	Don't throw sand.
Wipe your brush on the jar.	Don't drip paint on the floor.
Time to go inside.	Shall we go inside?
Please eat your own food.	Don't bother Johnny.
Walk around the swing.	Be careful of the swing.
Touch the baby gently.	Don't hit the baby.
I'm afraid you'll be late.	You're too slow.
Turn the pages carefully.	Don't tear the book.
I like the way you're playing with Sue.	No comment.
Thank you for remembering to take turns.	No comment

Appendix J

Improving Critical Listening Skills in the Classroom

Here are some more suggestions for improving the critical thinking and critical listening skills of young children in the classroom:

1. Refer some of the children's questions back to the group. "What do you think?"

2. Survey the information and opinions the class already has on the topic. For example, when Johnny asks "Why is the sky blue?" ask the group for any opinions or answers.

3. Leave some questions open. Not all need to be authoritatively answered. This stimulates the children's curiosity and sense of wonder. Why is the sky blue, anyway?

4. Elicit the children's reactions to imaginary scenarios. What would you do if a big kid scared your baby sister? What do you think about spinach ice cream?

5. Encourage the children to apply ideas to their own situation. After reading a story, ask if anything like that ever happened to anyone in class.

6. Allow the discussion to meander away from your point to encourage the children to follow up on the ramifications of a lesson.

7. Praise children who ask questions.

8. Encourage the children to discuss topics and settle disputes without the teacher's intervention. "Tell Johnny how you feel." "You hurt his feelings. Please help him feel better now."

9. Children can evaluate whether a statement is "real" or "silly." "All dogs are brown. I can ride on a train. Houses can walk."

10. Children can evaluate whether a statement is "fact" or "feeling." "I like to eat ice cream. Ice cream is cold."

11. Tell the children that a speaker may try to influence their feelings or change their ideas in addition to providing information or entertainment.

12. Encourage analysis by playing such games as "If I were a ___(cat)___, I would ___drink milk___."

13. Practice divergent thinking in which the idea is to come up with many different possible answers. This contrasts with convergent thinking in which the object is for everyone to arrive at the same predetermined answer. Here are some of the results of an exercize in divergent thinking on "Ears are good for ..."

listening	hearing
knowing	wearing ears
put clothes on	hold your glasses
washing	hold a hat
hear creatures	help you swim
hear a fire	hear television
hear a fire drill	hear rain
put on a crown	hear a story
paint them green	hear a boat
cover your ears	
listen for your name	
helping put a mask on	
hold a pencil behind	
put sunglasses on	
put your hair behind your ears	
hear how many spashes in the pool	
hear when your teacher calls you	

Appendix K

Overall Scores on Pretests and Posttests

Student	Pretest	Posttest	% Improvement
1	67	98	46
2	52	87	67
3	70	84	20
4	56	91	62
5	52	84	38
6	36	85	136
7	61	87	42
8	33	94	184
9	51	83	38
10	52	80	54
11	44	90	105
12	66	95	44
13	47	87	64
14	79	96	21
15	74	96	30
16	61	82	34
17	45	84	87
18	69	87	26
19	51	76	49
20	70	93	33

Appendix L

Test Scores for Parts One and Two

Student	Discriminate Phonemes (30 points) pre test	post test	% improve	Recognize Word in a Story (20 points) pre test	post test	% improve
1	26	30	15	18	18	0
2	7	30	329	14	14	0
3	22	30	35	12	16	33
4	20	29	45	16	18	13
5	11	28	155	18	20	11
6	10	26	160	10	18	80
7	24	28	17	8	18	125
8	5	28	460	10	20	100
9	14	28	29	12	16	33
10	14	24	71	18	18	0
11	10	28	180	16	16	0
12	22	28	27	12	18	50
13	14	22	57	14	20	43
14	26	30	15	10	16	60
15	26	30	15	12	18	50
16	11	26	136	16	18	13
17	12	24	100	16	20	25
18	25	30	20	18	16	-11
19	13	28	115	10	14	40
20	20	30	50	16	18	13
Average Improvement			102%			34%

Appendix M

Test Scores on Parts Three and Four

	Retell a Story (30 points)			Following Directions (20 points)			
Student	pre test	post test	% Improve	pre test	post test	% Improve	self-eval.
1	7	30	300	16	20	25	50%
2	15	24	60	16	19	19	50%
3	18	18	0	18	20	11	50%
4	1	24	2300	20	20	0	50%
5	7	20	185	16	16	0	50%
6	1	22	2100	16	19	19	50%
7	11	22	100	18	19	6	50%
8	1	27	2600	18	19	6	50%
9	9	30	233	16	19	19	50%
10	4	18	350	16	20	25	50%
11	1	27	2600	18	19	6	50%
12	19	30	58	13	19	46	50%
13	1	25	240	18	20	11	50%
14	24	30	25	19	20	5	50%
15	19	28	47	17	20	16	50%
16	15	20	33	19	18	-5	50%
17	4	20	200	13	20	54	50%
18	8	21	162	18	20	11	50%
19	11	16	64	17	18	6	50%
20	21	27	29	19	19	0	25%

Appendix N

Comparison of Overall Test Scores
In Male and Female Students

Student	pre test	post test	% improve
		Female	
1	67	98	46
3	70	84	20
7	61	87	42
11	44	90	105
12	66	95	44
14	79	96	21
15	74	96	30
16	61	82	34
17	45	84	87
20	70	93	33
Average	64	91	46
		Male	
2	52	87	67
4	56	91	62
5	52	84	38
6	36	85	136
8	33	94	184
9	51	83	38
10	52	80	54
13	47	87	64
18	69	87	26
19	51	76	49
Average	50	85	71

Appendix O

Comparison of Overall Test Scores of Students Speaking Spanish with Their Parents and Students Speaking English with Their Parents

Student	pre test	post test	% Improve
	English		
1	67	98	46
3	70	84	20
4	56	91	62
7	61	87	42
8	33	94	184
10	52	80	54
11	44	90	105
14	79	96	21
15	74	96	30
16	61	82	34
18	69	87	26
19	51	76	49
20	70	93	33
Average	61	89	54
	Spanish		
2	52	87	67
5	52	84	38
6	36	85	136
9	51	83	38
12	66	95	44
13	47	87	64
17	45	84	87
Average	50	86	68

Appendix P

Comparison of Overall Test Scores of Bilingual and Monolingual Students

Student	Pretest	Posttest	% Improvement
	Bilingual		
1	67	98	46
2	52	87	67
5	52	84	38
6	36	85	136
7	61	87	42
9	51	83	38
12	66	95	44
13	47	87	64
15	74	96	30
16	61	82	34
17	45	84	87
20	70	93	33
Average	57	88	55
	Monolingual		
3	70	84	20
4	56	91	62
8	33	94	184
10	52	80	54
11	44	90	105
14	79	96	21
18	69	87	26
19	51	76	49
Average	57	87	65

Appendix Q

Sample Page from Parent Workshop Materials

LISTENING GAMES TO PLAY WITH YOUR KIDS

You can help to improve your child's ability to listen attentively by practicing listening activities in an informal setting. These games can help children to understand the importance of good listening at the same time that they improve their listening skills.

Listen for the Last Number.

Count backwards slowly, letting your voice grow softer and softer until it is barely audible. Ask the children to tell you the last number they heard you say. Now give each child a turn to count backwards (or forwards, or say the ABCs), making his voice softer and softer while you listen for the last number.

Where Is That Sound?

Have the children close their eyes (some children may enjoy using a blindfold or a blanket over their head instead). You ring a bell somewhere in the room and they point to where the sound is coming from. Give each child a turn to ring the bell.

Variation to include practice with expressive language: The children must <u>tell</u> you where they think the sound is coming from: from the sink in the kitchen, from under the big chair, etc.

Words that Begin with B

List all the words you know that start with the sound "b" (or any other sound). This is a listening exercise so it is the sound, not the written letter, that you are working with. For example, if you are listing words that start with "c" (or start like "cat"), "kangaroo" is good but "child" is not.

You can vary this game to fit the situation. With a single child, you may want to take turns: first you give an example and they she does. With a small group, set a time limit and see how many words they can think of in one minute. In a larger group, divide into teams and have a timed competition or take turns until one team can't think of a new word. A large group may also enjoy sitting in a circle with each member of the group contributing a new word. Can they get all the way around the circle?

Appendix R

Sample page from Listening Handbook
for Educators

B) Listening Center. Listening activities can be made available to young children in the form of records or taped listening activities to reinforce and practice a variety of listening skills such as:

1) listening for enjoyment to music or stories,

2) identifying familiar sounds or voices,

3) identifying or matching beginning or ending sounds or vowel sounds,

4) completing a sentence,

5) deciding whether a statement is "silly" or true,

6) providing the missing words in a story,

7) following directions.

Appendix S

Results of Teacher Evaluations

Student	Week 3	Week 11	Improvement
Part 1: Discriminates English Phonemes			
1	3	5	2
2	1	5	4
3	1	5	4
4	2	5	3
5	1	5	4
6	1	4	3
7	2	5	3
8	1	5	4
9	1	5	4
10	1	4	3
11	1	5	4
12	2	5	3
13	1	4	3
14	2	5	3
15	2	5	3
16	1	5	4
17	1	4	3
18	2	5	3
19	1	5	4
20	1	5	4
Part 2: Remembers Words in a Story			
1	3	5	2
2	2	4	2
3	1	4	3
4	2	5	3
5	2	5	3
6	1	5	4
7	1	5	4
8	1	5	4
9	1	4	3
10	2	5	3
11	2	4	2
12	1	5	4
13	2	5	3
14	1	5	4
15	1	5	4
16	2	5	3
17	2	5	3
18	2	4	2
19	1	4	3
20	2	5	3

Student	Week 3	Week 11	Improvement
	Part 3: Retell a Story		
1	1	5	4
2	1	4	3
3	1	3	2
4	1	4	3
5	1	5	4
6	1	4	3
7	1	4	3
8	1	5	4
9	1	5	4
10	1	5	4
11	1	5	4
12	1	5	4
13	3	4	1
14	2	5	3
15	1	5	4
16	1	5	4
17	1	3	2
18	1	3	2
19	1	3	2
20	1	5	4
	Part 4: Following Directions		
1	1	5	4
2	2	5	3
3	2	5	3
4	3	5	3
5	2	4	2
6	2	5	3
7	2	5	3
8	2	5	3
9	2	5	3
10	2	5	3
11	2	5	3
12	2	5	3
13	2	5	3
14	3	5	2
15	2	5	3
16	2	5	3
17	2	5	3
18	2	5	3
19	1	5	4
20	2	5	3

Appendix T

Critical Thinking and Self-Reflection Checklist

Critical Thinking and Self-Reflection Checklist

The GEM Practicum Internship

John Barell - (Adapted)

Using a scale of 1 to 5, rate your work setting according to the following items:
5=Very Often 4=Often 3=Sometimes 2=Seldom 1=Rarely

CLASSROOM

1.	When students pose unusual or divergent questions, I ask, "What made you think of that?"	5 (4) 3 2 1
2.	Information in the text is challenged.	5 (4) 3 2 1
3.	When a decision has to be made between involving the class discussion of an intriguing student idea (topic related) or moving on to "cover" content, I choose the former.	(5) 4 3 2 1
4.	I encourage participants to seek alternative answers.	(5) 4 3 2 1
5.	The target group receives positive reinforcement for initiating questions.	(5) 4 3 2 1
6.	Problems are used as a means for the target group to generate their own questions (or problems), which we then seriously consider.	5 (4) 3 2 1
7.	Teaching and learning occur without teacher talk.	(5) 4 3 2 1

8.	Most questions posed during class can be answered with short or one-word answers.	5 (4) 3 2 1
9.	Students spontaneously engage in critiquing each other's thinking.	5 (4) 3 2 1
10.	Students are encouraged to relate subject matter to experiences in other subjects or to their personal lives.	(5) 4 3 2 1
11.	I stress how to think, not what to think.	(5) 4 3 2 1
12.	Students often set objectives for their own learning.	(5) 4 3 2 1
13.	Students spend time working collaboratively to solve subject matter questions.	(5) 4 3 2 1
14.	One focus in my implementation is trying to help others understand how and why people (mentioned in texts) created ideas, solutions, experiments, rules, principles, and so on.	5 (4) 3 2 1
15.	Students actively listen to each other.	(5) 4 3 2 1
16.	I facilitate collaborative instructional problem solving.	(5) 4 3 2 1